

## ISR-BULLETIN EUGEO2025



# WELCOME TO THE 10<sup>TH</sup> EUGEO CONGRESS 2025!

## Welcome to Vienna!

We warmly welcome you to the 10<sup>th</sup> EUGEO Congress **Geographies of a Changing Europe**, held from 8 to 11 September 2025 at the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The congress brings together over 500 scholars from across Europe and beyond to engage in stimulating discussions, and strengthen academic networks. With two keynote lectures, 85 parallel sessions, nine city walks, and a social event, we aim to provide a dynamic forum for scholarly exchange and community building.

Vienna, with its rich cultural heritage, excellent accessibility, and evolving urban landscape, offers an ideal setting to explore Europe's changing geographies. The historic Academy campus provides both a symbolic and intellectual space to reflect on geographical transformations in the context of pressing social, environmental, and political challenges. Organized by the Institute for Urban and Regional Research of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, and supported by the Austrian Geographical Society and the country's geographical institutes, the congress highlights geography's evolving disciplinary questions tackling challenges regarding Europe's future.

## The Austrian Academy of Sciences

Founded in 1847, the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW) is the leading institution for non-university basic research in Austria. Its 27 research institutes span the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, fostering innovative approaches to key scientific and societal issues. Through expert commissions, the Academy contributes to public policy, addresses questions of future relevance, and promotes the dissemination of scientific findings to broader audiences. The ÖAW also serves as Austria's national representative in major international scientific organizations and is a hub for cross-border research cooperation. Its mission includes preserving cultural heritage, addressing emerging global challenges, and shaping the country's research landscape in collaboration with national and international partners.

As the host of the EUGEO 2025 Congress, the Austrian Academy of Sciences continues its long-standing tradition of supporting scholarly exchange and fostering dialogue across disciplines and borders.

## ISR – INSTITUTE FOR URBAN AND REGIONAL RESEARCH

The Institute for Urban and Regional Research (ISR) is the successor to the Commission for Spatial Research and Reconstruction, founded in 1946 by Hugo Hassinger. In 1954, the commission was taken over by Hans Bobek, a leading social geographers of his time. Under his leadership, the production of the Atlas of the Republic of Austria was initiated, and Christaller's central place theory was introduced as a planning tool in Austria. These foundational efforts laid the groundwork for a tradition of spatial research that continues to define the ISR's mission today.

The ISR focuses on analysing the structures and dynamics of contemporary society in both urban and regional contexts. Research explores the interplay between population, society, and the natural, built, and social environment. The ISR is committed to a transdisciplinary and problem-oriented approach, with societal challenges and scientific inquiry at the core of its work. Most of its projects are international and comparative in scope, with a geographic emphasis on Vienna, Austria, and Europe.

The ISR research relies on a broad variety of qualitative and quantitative methods, ranging from quantitative register-based research to qualitative arts-based research or collaborative visual methods. This enables us to develop joint multi-method-approaches responding to current urban challenges.

As the ISR mainly addresses societal challenges, knowledge transfer towards society is a key feature for the institute. For this reason, the ISR runs various transfer channels, such as the open-access ISR research reports or the ISR Bulletin that provides focused insights into our research results. Current research is organised around four thematic groups: "Migration and Urban Diversity," "Housing and Urban Economy," "Sustainable Urban Regions," and "Culture and Urban Transformation."

## ISR RESEARCH GROUPS

### RG MIGRATION AND URBAN DIVERSITY

European cities are currently undergoing profound transformations connected to economic and demographic shifts, which are the focus of the research group "Migration and Urban Diversity". Capitals and larger cities with highly differentiated urban economies are experiencing significant growth driven by international migration, both voluntary and forced. This often goes along with phenomena like socio-spatial segregation, diversity, and societal polarisation. The scale and dynamics of urban change are considerable. The research group specializes in the study of migration-related urban transformation, asking, inter alia, how migration shapes the spatial, social, and political transformation of European cities, how local governments, policies and institutions respond to migration, how politics of belonging and exclusion are negotiated and how this is reflected in the urban fabric.



Figure 1: Reumannplatz in the 10th district, our study area in the D.Rad project, facing north (Ursula Reeger)

To tackle these questions, the group brings together interdisciplinary expertise from across various fields – geographical, sociological, political, literary and socio-anthropological – with a focus on analysing diversity, examining local integration, public space, urban housing markets, wellbeing of migrants, interethnic relations, and migrant economies. Its research questions are problem-oriented, and the work is theory-based with an empirical focus. The research combines basic and applied approaches and also develops policy recommendations.

Members of the research group were and are involved in a variety of national and international projects, such as D.Rad (Horizon 2020, focus on inclusion and exclusion in urban public space), OppAttune (Horizon Europe, focus on extreme narratives in online and offline spaces), Migwell (FWF, focus on migration and wellbeing regarding the Hungary-Austria migration nexus), Ma(r)king Neighbourhoods (FWF 1000 Ideas, focus on perceptions of neighbourhoods and negotiations of belonging), to name a few.

### RG HOUSING AND URBAN ECONOMY

The central research interest of this working group lies in the analysis of spatial structures and dynamics of urban housing markets. The focus is on actor constellations and valorization strategies within housing markets, as well as their effects on the residential population and the built environment. The working group understands housing markets, on the one hand, as an integrative interface of various societal domains – population, sustainability, economy and labor market, urban policy and planning, and the built environment. On the other hand, they are seen as a multi-scalar phenomenon influenced by processes at different levels (international, national, regional, local).

Considering multi-scalar influences and the interactions between these levels and the housing market helps to better understand current developments, challenges, and conflicts. With this understanding, the housing market also represents an important thematic link to the other working groups within the institute.



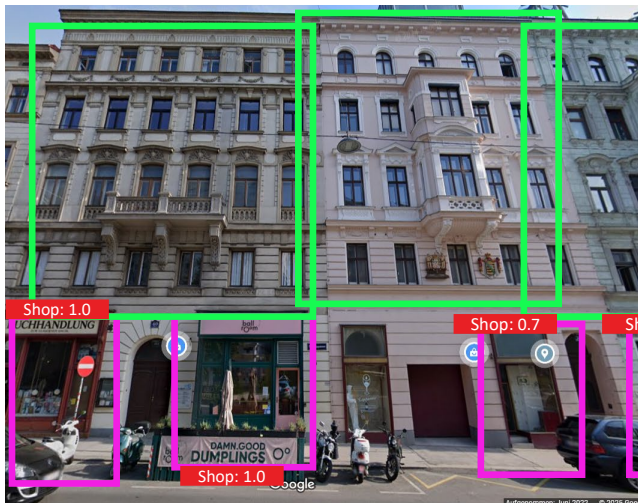


Figure 2: The AI-based analysis of Street View Images provide data on building conditions and functional change of ground floor zones in the whole city (Silvio Heinze)

The working group focuses on three central research areas, which overlap and thus offer synergies: the challenge of affordable housing, the commodification of the historic housing stock and the transformation of neighbourhoods on the microscale.

The working group follows an interdisciplinary and theme-oriented research logic and draws on a broad and innovative methodological spectrum. In the field of quantitative methods, GIS-based and (geo-)statistical applications are mainly used to conduct analyses at the level of individual buildings. In the field of qualitative methods, collaborative techniques such as reflexive photography or arts-based approaches are used to gain deeper insights, for example into valorization strategies or displacement processes. Furthermore, the working group is actively engaged in developing machine learning methods to generate new individual-level data, for example on the physical condition of buildings or their functional usage structure.

Through various research projects, the Housing and Urban Economy working group aims to analyze current housing

and urban development policy dynamics from multiple perspectives, to empirically identify problem areas, and to contribute scientifically grounded input toward the development of sustainable and socially just solutions.

### RG SUSTAINABLE URBAN REGIONS

The original motivation of the SUUREG group is the interest in how our societal and economic activities re-shape spaces, centrally combined with an ecological concern about land as a vital, yet scarce resource, and the environment as a vital, yet complex system. From there stems the aim to analyse the context of socio-ecologic transformation from a spatial perspective in cities and regions. This analytical perspective is consecutively followed by understanding how we govern and moderate the societal needs through spatial policies and planning; needs such as housing, infrastructure, mobility, economic, cultural and, not least, health-related, recreational activities in this context of transformation and at times crises. SUUREG takes a systemic, urban-regional perspective – theory-led and practice-relevant.

Cities of the 21st century are the societal, economic and infrastructural nodes of global networks. At the same time, cities of various size continue to be in a political economic function as centre for their hinterland as well as in mutual exchange of ecologic services. Thus, normatively spoken, cities hold responsible towards their hinterland. Under these tensions, SUUREG interprets cities beyond constituting a single locality but looks into polycentric formations, regional city-hinterland disparities, centre-periphery dynamics, and the multiple roles of a city as a 'place' and regional centre in functional urban regions. Together with international colleagues across Europe as well as with local stakeholders, SUUREG fosters a discourse of sustainability and post-growth in the context of urban and regional development. Contextually, the group profits from broad and specialised expertise in Social Sciences, Geography, GIS and Spatial Planning.



Figure 3: Citizen-mapped data on perceived heat exposure collected in project BLUEMAP (Anna Kajosaari)

## RG CULTURE AND URBAN TRANSFORMATION

The Working Group on Culture and Urban Transformation is organized around the work of “Theatre and Gentrification in the European City” (THEAGENT, Grant Agreement 101043740), an ERC Consolidator Grant Project that began at the Institute for Urban and Regional Research in September 2023.

Combining multi-sited ethnographic and archival research, THEAGENT’s goal is to analyze the relationship between theatre practices and urban transformation in five European metropolises in the twenty-first century: London, Berlin, Paris, Warsaw, and Istanbul. We argue that understanding the relationship between theatre and gentrification requires a three-pronged approach that encapsulates theatre’s material and symbolic economies. We thus focus on theatre-going as a practice of urban subject formation; the aesthetic medium as a space for the creation and circulation of novel representations of the urban; and theatres themselves as urban institutions.

THEAGENT builds on the limited yet increasingly rich body of scholarship from Urban Studies that evaluates the relationship between gentrification and the arts. We argue that if theatre serves as a space of urban subject formation, then the everyday practices and negotiations through which it experiences its built environment, civic context and real estate market will provide much-needed evidence for how “the arts” can foster both proximity and hierarchy in the context of urban change. In turn, the project’s comparative structure speaks to a key concern in Urban Studies scholarship: the tension between universal models of globalized urbanization and the specificities of urban cultures.



Figure 3: View of the court yard of the renovated and ‘hipsterised’ Bomonti Brewery in Kurtuluş (Clio Unger)

## THEMATIC PLATFORM MIGRATION AND DIVERSITY

The Thematic Platform Migration and Diversity fosters interdisciplinary exchange in migration and diversity research both within and beyond the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW). It seeks to bridge academic knowledge and societal discourse by promoting the transfer of research findings to a wider public.

Migration research spans numerous disciplines—including sociology, geography, political science, demography, economics, law, history, cultural and social anthropology, linguistics, and literary studies. To encourage dialogue across these fields, the platform organizes a biennial conference that addresses a central thematic focus while welcoming broader contributions. The next conference, co-hosted with the University of Innsbruck in September 2024, will explore the theme „Global Inequalities, (Im)Mobilities, and Migration Societies: Post-Migrant Perspectives.“

While migration has become a central issue in European media and politics over the past two decades, scholarly research on the topic—rooted in interdisciplinary approaches since the 1970s—has only more recently gained broader academic recognition. In Austria, however, the public visibility of this research remains limited. To help close this gap, the platform curates the book series “Migration & ...”, which presents academic findings in accessible language for a broader audience. In doing so, the platform aims to contribute to a more nuanced and evidence-based public debate on migration and diversity.

### ECKDATEN

**Projektteam:** Robert Musil und Jiannis Kaucic  
**Laufzeit:** November 2023 bis September 2024

### ZUM WEITERLESEN

Musil, R. und Kaucic, J. (2024): Housing-market segmentation as a driver of urban micro-segregation? An in-depth analysis of two Viennese districts. In: Land 13, 1507. DOI doi.org/10.3390/land13091507 .

### KONTAKT

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